

POSSIBLE CHANGES TO REGULATIONS FOR SHARKS — SMOOTHHOUND (SMOOTH DOGFISH)

The ASMFC Coastal Sharks Management Board approved Addendum IV to the FMP for Atlantic Coastal Sharks on August 2, 2016. As a result, the Department is required to implement Addendum IV in state waters by January 1, 2017. The Addendum amends the FMP to allow smooth dogfish carcasses to be landed with corresponding fins removed from the carcass as long as the total retained catch on board at the time of offloading is composed of at least 25 percent, by weight, smooth dogfish. Fishermen in state waters and in possession of a valid state commercial fishing license can eviscerate and remove the head and all shark fins of smooth dogfish (*Mustelus canis*) while at sea provided smooth dogfish make up at least 25 percent, by weight, of the total catch on board at the time of offloading. Trips that do not meet the 25 percent catch composition requirement can land smooth dogfish, but the fins must remain naturally attached to the carcass. Fishermen may retain other sharks on board provided the fins of other shark species remain naturally attached to the carcass through offloading. Naturally attached is defined as attached to the corresponding shark through some portion of uncut skin.

The Addendum maintains consistency between federal and state shark FMPs and better incorporates the intent of the smooth dogfish limited exception in the Shark Conservation Act of 2010 (SCA) into state regulations.

Scoped at the Sport Fisheries Advisory Commission and Tidal Fisheries Advisory Commission meetings in October 2016